

R E M A R K S

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

THE CLAIMS

The claims have been amended to delete reference numerals therefrom and to make some minor grammatical improvements and to correct some minor antecedent basis problems, including the antecedent basis problem in claim 7 pointed out by the Examiner.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments be approved and entered and that the rejection of claim 7 under 35 USC 112 be withdrawn.

It is respectfully submitted, moreover, that the amendments to the claims are not related to patentability, and do not narrow the scope of the claims either literally or under the doctrine of equivalents.

And it is respectfully submitted that allowed claim 11 remains in condition for allowance.

RE: THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 1 and 6 were rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by Toda (JP 2003-184134), and claims 2-15 and 7-10 were all rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious over Toda in view of one of Izumi (EP 0462589), Takeuchi (DE 3823283), and Duell et al (USP 6,312,209). These rejections, however, are

respectfully traversed because it is respectfully submitted that Toda is not a proper prior art reference against the present application.

The present application claims the priority of Japanese patent application No. 2003-022319 filed January 30, 2003, and submitted herewith is an accurate English-language translation of the Japanese priority application to show that JP 2003-022319 fully supports the subject matter of the claims of the present application, so as to perfect the priority claim.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the prior art rejections are overcome and should be withdrawn.

\* \* \* \* \*

Entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,

/Douglas Holtz/

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